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Travel



5 PAGES OF FAMILY FUN
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A package to spice up your sport



BIG DRAW: Ashes on tour

WITH the football World Cup over, sports fans can turn their attention to other major sporting events both in the UK and around the world.

Building on the success of their trips to the World Cup finals in South Africa Thomas Cook Sport has a range of packages for all you sporty types.

These include the rugby autumn internationals as teams prepare for next year's World Cup in New Zealand, the Vodafone Ashes in Australia, the Ryder Cup in South Wales, or follow Lewis and Jenson at the Grand Prix in Monza, Italy.

Danny Talbot, managing director of Thomas Cook Sport, says: "Interest in packages to major events, such as the Ashes, has picked up in the days following South Africa 2010 as fans look forward to the fantastic sporting year ahead."

Sport travellers can find out about and book Thomas Cook Sport's range of packages by calling 0208 739 2360 or visiting www.thomascooksport.com.

WIN £25

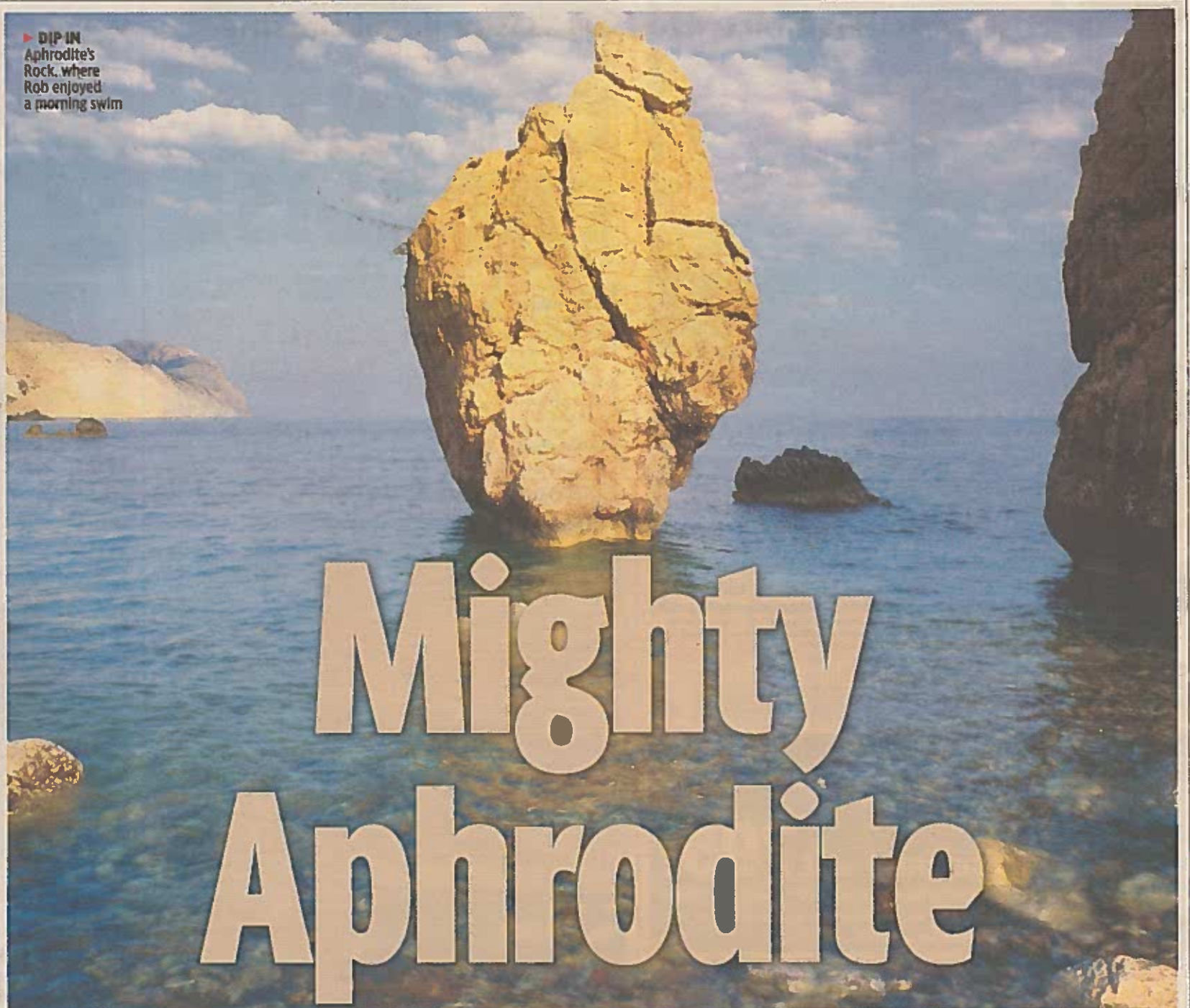
GOT a top travel tip to share with other readers? It could be anything from a great campsite in the UK to a family diner in Orlando. Email your tips to traveldesk@mirror.co.uk and we'll pay £25 for the best one each week.

IF you're cruising from Southampton buy your foreign currency in the town the day you depart. You get a better exchange rate when ships are in port as the crew are depositing their tips.

TOP TIP
Mike Gregvett Boston Lincs

In association with Stena Line, sail to Holland from £49. Visit www.stenaline.co.uk

Stena Line



► DIP IN Aphrodite's Rock, where Rob enjoyed a morning swim

Mighty Aphrodite

As a first-time dad in his 40s, **ROB MCGIBBON** wants to find a peaceful place so he can recharge his batteries

MORE couples are becoming parents in their 40s than ever before, statistics show.

So there are more first-time parents in their 40s in dire need of a holiday than ever before too.

My first child - Joseph - is now 20 months old and though I could bore you until your dotage with tales of the joys of his arrival in my life, I can also confirm he has left my wife Emma and me somewhat done in.

It's not that he is especially hard work. He's a great sleeper and can happily play on his own for stretches of time. It's just that after all those years of freedom, a baby suddenly locks you into an inescapable, relentless routine that's quite draining.

OK, I know we've only got one kid and I am a total lightweight, but I have rarely needed a holiday so much. And to think, I'm probably

only doing about 30% of the baby graft. Must be my age.

In our self-indulgent, time-rich childless years, we often took breaks and when we ventured abroad, it wasn't so much to rest as to explore. Hence, we often opted for slightly off-track trips you could sum up as "rustic". A hideaway Italian villa, or a remote chalet in the Swiss Alps.

A bit of self-catering and roughing it was all part of our holiday "journey". But in a life that now involves less sleep and more noise, the word "rustic" has a new meaning.

It now equals aggravation, discomfort and misery. A rusting shower-head that dispenses tepid water in a dribble, or sleeping in a lumpy old bed with disgusting pillows doesn't have the same allure.

I need luxury. I need things done for me, like washing up, bed-making and breakfast. I need mod-cons,

air-con and staff. Lots of staff. In short, I need a five-star hotel and so does my "it has to be authentic or what's the point in travelling" wife.

I associate the InterContinental Hotel group with high-end business hotels and refined stuffiness.

But the InterConti's Aphrodite Hills Resort in Cyprus is a family-friendly five-star gem that caters for whacked-out parents and their noisy offspring with aplomb. It opened its arms like a long-lost rich aunt intent on spoiling us.

The resort is 10 miles east of Paphos on a plateau surrounded by hills, overlooking the Mediterranean. It opened in 2005, so no delusions of rusticity.

The joy of being in a hotel on a gated estate is that it makes you stay still. Everything is laid on and within easy reach, but if you



RECHARGE: Rob and Emma unwind with Joseph at the resort

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